

I have two concerns about this proposal.

1) How does restricting choice in a market promote its expansion? With a multitude of ISPs providing access over BellSouth's lines, it's a good bet that some innovation will occur (whether that be in bundled features, higher quality of support, etc.) that would not with BellSouth the only player. I currently am an SBC customer but use an alternative ISP for my DSL service for exactly this reason: the service provided by the alternative is of much higher quality for a similar price. Previously I used SBC DSL, which was a horrible experience; without an alternative available, I likely would have given up on DSL entirely. I'm sure I'm not the only one. Broadband penetration is positively affected by consumers having a choice.

2) There is currently an ongoing debate on the issue of mass media concentration, and its potential to reduce the diversity of viewpoints that the public is exposed to. The reason I often hear given why this will not be a problem is we have the Internet, with its near-infinite sources of information and opinion. However, with the limitations in consumer choice that would result in the long term (that choice being limited to the phone company that owns the wiring to a home, and the local cable monopoly), there is the potential to stifle access to this diversity. There is no technical reason that eventually the owners of an ISP would not be able to skew or filter content that does not agree with their own viewpoint on an issue, much in the same way some newspapers, cable channels, etc. exhibit an obvious bias today.